



Wicking Bed Recipe

The idea of a wicking bed is to create a raised garden bed that is watered from the bottom up. This can save water by reducing evaporation and is better for those plants that don't like overhead watering. It works by creating an area below the soil of the garden bed where water is stored and can move through. Then the soil on top acts like a sponge taking up water as it dries out.

Wicking beds can be made from all recycled materials, for example, old fridges, corrugated iron and foam boxes can all be used as a base. As long as the water can't drain out of the base layer, but can drain out the side of the soil layer

INGREDIENTS PART I: The watering pipe

- Enough pipe to run along the bed and up the sides at each end.
- Two pipe elbows
- Mesh pipe end covers (optional)

INGREDIENTS PART II: The frame and bed

- Material for constructing frame, we used corrugated iron and four wooden posts. As long as the sides hold water any material you can scavenge are fine.
- Drainage aggregate—We used a combination of blue metal and crushed brick as it was what we had available)
- Carpet, shade cloth or similar, enough for two layers.

METHOD PART I: Preparing the watering pipe

Step 1: Cut holes in the pipe that runs the length of the wicking bed. We cut slits rather than drilled holes because we had an angle grinder handy. If you're lucky enough to have scrounged some agg pipe there's no need to cut/ drill holes at all.

Step 2: Attach the elbow and uprights to both ends of the watering pipe. The holes should be at the bottom of the pipe, this allows water to drain out, while reducing the amount of material falling into the pipe through the holes.



METHOD PART II — Making the bed



Step 1

1. Construct outer frame. It is very important that it is level so the water is evenly distributed.

2. Place carpet or similar material at base.



Step 2



Step 3

3. Place water proof layer, this will hold water in the bed. This layer needs to come up the sides of the wicking bed to contain the aggregate, but not the soil as this needs to be able to drain.

4. Put in a base layer of the drainage aggregate.



Step 4



Step 5

5. Place the watering pipe on the base drainage aggregate layer. It is **very important that this pipe is level** or all the water will empty at one end of the bed and the other end will dry out).

6. Cover the watering pipe with drainage aggregate.



Step 6



Step 7

7. Place a layer of material that will stop organic mater/ soil clogging the aggregate and/or getting into the watering pipe.

8. Fill with soil, plant you're veggies and cover with mulch. Note the optional watering pipe cover to discourage rats and mosquitoes.



Step 8



Two Weeks Later...

This is what the wicking bed looked like after watering 1-2 times a week during summer!